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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 001806

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SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTRY PROPOSES MOU ON COUNTERTERRORISM
COORDINATION TO AMBASSADOR

Classified By: Ambassador Timothy Roemer for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY. Ambassador Roemer pressed External Affairs Minister Krishna August 28 to complete the outstanding civil nuclear cooperation implementation items prior to Prime Minister Singh's November 24 visit to Washington. Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary (Americas) Gaitri Kumar confirmed that the Indian Government likewise hoped to make progress on civil nuclear implementation, but gave no assurances. Krishna asserted that dialogue with Pakistan would only be meaningful in an atmosphere of mutual trust, and that he looked forward to Pakistan taking action against the perpetrators of the Mumbai terrorist attacks. On the margins of the meeting, Kumar proposed a joint Memorandum of Understanding on counterterrorism cooperation as a possible deliverable for Prime Minister Singh's visit, saying it would "send a powerful signal." END SUMMARY.

Civ Nuke and Prime Minister Singh's Visit

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12. (C) External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna emphasized the importance for India of the Prime Minister's November 24 official state visit to the United States. He looked forward to the Strategic Dialogue he helped launch during Secretary Clinton's visit helping to "cement" the U.S.-India relationship. Pressed by Ambassador Roemer about completing the five outstanding civil nuclear cooperation implementation items prior to the Prime Minister's visit -- the IAEA facilities declaration, site announcements, liability legislation, fast-tracked reprocessing consultations, and Part 810 assurances -- Krishna deferred to Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary Gaitri Kumar, who was also present for the meeting. Kumar said the Indian Government planned to submit liability legislation to the next session of Parliament in November and that the sites would be confirmed by the Cabinet. The IAEA facilities declaration was also "in process" with the Department of Atomic Energy and the Prime Minister's Office. Part 810 assurances were being considered "on a high priority basis." She added that "the ambitious among us" would like to complete the reprocessing consultations prior to the Prime Minister's

visit, and the Indian Government was consulting internally about the timeline.

Pakistan and Afghanistan

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13. (C) India's stand on Pakistan-based terror had been vindicated by the UN Security Council, according to Krishna. India had just handed over its sixth dossier of evidence on the Mumbai terrorist attacks, and he "looked forward to Pakistan taking action." "For any talks to be meaningful," Krishna asserted, "there must first be an atmosphere of mutual trust." Ambassador Roemer shared that he had stressed with his Pakistani counterpart in New Delhi the importance of taking action against the perpetrators of the Mumbai terrorist attacks in parallel with pursuing dialogue and diplomacy. Krishna opined that Afghan President Karzai would "perhaps" win in the first round of the Afghan elections. Krishna underscored India's commitment to Afghan reconstruction and said it was "worth the investment."

Joint MoU on Counterterrorism?

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14. (C) Krishna observed that both India and the United States had been "mauled badly by terrorism," and that we shared a common enemy. He added vaguely that we should have a joint counterterrorism "action plan." Following the meeting, Joint Secretary for the Americas Gaitri Kumar elaborated, proposing a joint Memorandum of Understanding on counterterrorism

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cooperation as a possible deliverable for Prime Minister Singh's visit, saying it would "send a powerful signal." She proposed jointly working on text following her return from accompanying Home Minister Chidambaram on his visit to the United States.

Getting to Know Krishna: Game, Set, Match

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15. (SBU) Krishna conveyed his condolences on the passing of Ted Kennedy, adding that "the United States had lost a great humanist, and India a steadfast friend." He said he never had the chance to meet him, but that he did speak with Bobby Kennedy when Krishna was a Fulbright student at George Washington University. Krishna became animated again later in the meeting when the Ambassador mentioned tennis.

Comment: New Indian Consulates As Leverage for Deliverables

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16. (C) Krishna's briefing materials, visible through the glass top of the coffee table, included only one 'ask': India "would appreciate quick clearances for proposed consulates in Seattle and Atlanta so they can become functional before the Prime Minister's visit." This point has been consistently repeated by other senior officials in recent meetings. Ambassador Roemer has, likewise, consistently emphasized the need to complete the five outstanding civil nuclear cooperation implementation items prior to the Prime Minister's visit. Post intends to use India's clear desire to move forward on the consulates as leverage to spur progress on these long over-due implementation items that will contribute to the creation of thousands of American jobs and allow us to focus on a broader global agenda. Minister of State Shashi Tharoor also specifically asked for assistance on the Seattle and Atlanta consulates in a August 28 meeting (septel). We should take note of the GOI's interest in this area and think and act more strategically as we line up our priorities and deliverables for the PM's visit.

ROEMER